IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 7-8 and 10 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a conditional access network wherein providers distribute valuable contents over the network and end-users are allowed to access such valuable contents in function of individual access rights, ~~characterized in that~~ the valuable contents ~~are~~ being made available to the end-users by way of a plurality of different conditional access systems, comprising the steps of:

providing end-users ~~are provided~~ with a generic conditional access component having a basic functionality common to all conditional access systems[[,]];

loading particular conditional access systems ~~are loaded~~ on the conditional access ~~components~~ component [[,]];

initially disabling the particular conditional access systems thus loaded on the component ~~are initially disabled~~[[,]];

acquiring a license ~~is acquired~~ for a particular conditional access system and enabling the conditional access system ~~is enabled~~ subject to a successful verification of the license.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the valuable contents are distributed in a digital transport stream that contains Entitlement Management Messages "EMMs" specific to each conditional access system.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein each conditional access component includes a filter unit for filtering out the specific EMMs of conditional access systems enabled on the component and a verifier unit for the verification of access rights defined by the filtered specific EMMs.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the valuable contents in the transport

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stream are scrambled, each conditional access component has a descrambler adapted to process a scrambled transport stream into a clear transport stream, and the descrambler is enabled or disabled in function of a successful or unsuccessful verification, respectively, of the access rights.

5. (Original)   The method of any of claims 1 to 4, wherein each conditional access system has an associated application for execution by the conditional access component.

6. (Original)   The method of claim 5, wherein applications are downloaded over the network from a conditional access application provider.

7. (Currently Amended)   The method ~~of any of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1, wherein the network includes service channels for the transmission of configuration data to the conditional access components.

8. (Currently Amended)   A conditional access component for use in a conditional access network wherein a provider distributes valuable contents over the network and end-users are allowed to access such valuable contents in function of individual access rights defined by a user license, ~~characterized by~~ comprising a basic functionality common to a plurality of different conditional access systems used in the network, a non-volatile memory for storing specific application software that constitutes a particular conditional access system in conjunction with the basic functionality, the particular conditional access system being initially disabled when the specific application is loaded in the non-volatile memory, means for acquiring a license for the particular conditional access system, and means for selectively enabling the particular conditional access system subject to a successful verification of a corresponding license.

9. (Original)   The conditional access component of claim 8, comprising a memory for storing at least one conditional access application associated with a particular conditional access system and means for loading said application into said memory.

10. (Currently Amended)   The conditional access component of claim 8 or claim 9, wherein the valuable contents ~~being~~ are distributed in a digital transport stream that contains Entitlement Management Messages "EMMs" specific to each conditional access system, and comprising a filter unit for filtering out specific EMMs of conditional access systems enabled on the component and a verifier unit for the verification of access rights defined by the filtered specific EMMs.